

Philosophy 4
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Summer 07

Paper Assignment #1

Your paper should be 4-5 pages, double-spaced (6 pages is too long, 5 ½ is pushing it). It should be 12 pt. font with 1" margins. SEE THE 'TIPS' SHEET FOR SOME GENERAL GUIDELINES ON HOW TO WRITE A PHILOSOPHY PAPER.

Your paper should have two parts. The **first part** (approx 3 ½ to 4 pages) is to consist of a clear and concise summary of Aristotle's ethical theory. Your summary should consist of a detailed explanation of the main questions Aristotle sets out to answer (what are the questions he wants to answer, how does he go about answering them, what are the answers he arrives at?).

Don't just lump everything Aristotle believes into your paper; you want to avoid your paper being a hodge-podge of disconnected observations about what Aristotle believes. You need to explain not only what he believes but also **why** he believes it. Despite appearances, there is a logical progression to Aristotle's theory. Your summary of Aristotle should contain that logical progression.

The **second part** (approx 1-1 ½ pages) will be your own reasoned evaluation (critique) of his ethical theory.

Here are some questions you may want to think about when writing your own evaluation.

Do you have any objections to his theory? If so, explain them and give reasons as to why your reader should think that your objections are good. Are there claims that he makes that are not supported by evidence? If there are, mention them and give reasons as to why your reader should be convinced that there are claims that are not backed up by any evidence. Are there claims that he makes that have evidence, but the evidence is not compelling? If so, give reasons for why your reader should believe this.

Is there a way you think Aristotle can improve his theory? If so, say how. Be sure that what you have to say is not inconsistent with the rest of his theory (you won't be improving the theory if you make it inconsistent).

Or, perhaps you largely agree with his theory. If so, give your own reasons for why the theory is good.